



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

CORRESPONDENCE

ON THE SOURCES OF *The Maid's Tragedy*

Nothing appears to be known of the sources of *The Maid's Tragedy*. Valerius Maximus, however, narrates an anecdote (III, viii, Ext. 1), which would seem to have supplied one of the incidents. I quote the whole section, italicizing the relevant passages.

Conplura huiusce notae Romana exempla supersunt, sed satietas modo uitanda est. itaque stilo meo ad externa iam delabi permittam. quorum principatum teneat Blassius, cuius *constantia nihil pertinentius*: Salapiam enim patriam suam praesidio Punico occupatam Romanis cupiens restituere Dasium *acerrimo studio secum in administratione rei publicae dissidentem* et alioquin toto animo Hannibalis amicitiae uacantem, *sine quo propositum consilium peragi non poterat, ad idem opus adgrediendum maiore cupiditate quam spe certiore temptare ausus est. qui protinus sermonem eius, adiectis quae et ipsum commendatiorem et inimicum inuisiorem factura uidebantur, Hannibali retulit.* a quo adesse iussi sunt, *ut alter crimen probaret, alter defenderet.* ceterum, cum pro tribunali res gereretur et quaestioni illi omnium oculi essent intenti, dum aliud forte ceterioris curae negotium tractatur, *Blassius uultu dissimulante ac uoce summissa monere Dasium coepit ut Romanorum potius quam Karthaginiensium partes foueret. enimuero tunc ille proclamat se in conspectu ducis aduersus eum sollicitari. quod quia et incredibile existimabatur et ad unius tantum auris penetrauerat et iactabatur ab inimico, ueritatis fide caruit. sed non ita multo post Blasii mira constantia Dasium ad se traxit* Marcelloque et Salapiam et quingentos Numidas, qui in ea custodiae causa erant, tradidit.

With regard to the main plot a suggestion or two may be made. Cornford, in his *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, 1907, p. 132, speaks of what he calls "the mythical type that normally appears in legend when tyrants have to be slain. The two brothers, or lovers, and the injured sister, or wife—the relationships vary—are the standing *dramatis personae* on such occasions." This formula pretty well describes the main plot of *The Maid's Tragedy*, and it seems not at all improbable that a search among such legends as those referred to by Cornford would furnish one fulfilling the two necessary conditions, namely, that of bearing a sufficiently close resemblance to the play to serve as a source, and that of being accessible to the authors.

A striking variation of the play from the formula consists in the facts that Evadne is herself guilty, that her ambition is partly responsible for her sin, and that her repentance is prerequisite to the punishment of the king, who is to fall by her hand. The drama

thus becomes a play of sin and repentance, highly seasoned to meet the tastes of a Jacobean audience, and these features are in all probability supplied by the authors. Nor is it at all likely that our presumptive source will contain any such figure as Aspatia, or any incidents corresponding to her relations with Amintor. Here again we may have the dramatists' additions, or perhaps, as in the case of the Calianax episode, some story hitherto unidentified may have been utilized. The plot of the drama is so very complicated that, even when we shall have done as much as has here been considered possible, a large allowance must still be made for the inventive genius of Beaumont and Fletcher.

If we should start with the story of Harmodius and Aristogiton, of which the friendship between Melantius and Amintor is strikingly suggestive, we might readily point out how the demands of the Jacobean theatre would build up out of that story one like that of the play. Hippias and Hipparchus become, as dramatic concentration would necessitate, one person, the king. The friendship of Harmodius and Aristogiton is retained, as it leads naturally to the interesting scene in which this friendship is put to the test; such scenes were common on the stage of the period. One of the friends takes no part in the conspiracy because there must be one prominent figure to represent the dominant political principle of the day, that of non-resistance; and his adherence to that principle is tested by subjecting him to an insult of an especially odious character. Changed ethical and social conditions of course demand that the attempt of Hipparchus upon Harmodius and the comparatively trivial insult offered to Harmodius's sister be replaced by dramatic motives more in harmony with English, or at any rate modern life. Dramatic interest is deepened and concentrated by making Evadne accessory to her own fall, by portraying the emotional conflict leading to her repentance, and by giving the punishment of her seducer into her own hand.

These remarks are purely speculative, and I was betrayed into them by the friendship between Melantius and Amintor, which seemed at first sight to supply a promising clue. It may be said, however, that if a brilliant Jacobean dramatist were to treat the story of Harmodius and Aristogiton, he would almost certainly introduce changes similar to those indicated. At any rate, a part of the play is unquestionably drawn from a classical source.

WILLIAM DINSMORE BRIGGS.

Stanford University.

Wieland AND *The Raven*

During a recent perusal of Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* certain words and forms of expression, besides the whole atmosphere and tenor of the story, began strongly to suggest to me Poe's *Raven*. The further I proceeded the deeper grew the impression